

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1 – 10 (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:  
reading means for reading image data of a variety of colors by scanning an original image from an original;  
first selecting means for selecting ~~whether image quality is low or high~~ image forming with respect to an original of low image quality;  
expanding means for expanding ~~the~~ the image data of ~~an~~ the original image read from ~~an~~ the original in bitmap data of one page of the original through prescanning by the reading means, the image data corresponding to a predetermined one ~~of a~~ of the variety of colors;  
distinguishing means for distinguishing whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not by an amount of the bitmap data;  
determining means for determining whether or not an image of sufficient image quality can be formed when an image distinguished by the distinguishing means is compressed by a compression method and a compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the first selecting means;  
guiding means for, when the determining means determines that the image of sufficient image quality cannot be formed, interrupting forming of the image, ~~and~~ guiding an operator and displaying a warning message;  
second selecting means for selecting whether or not the forming of the image with a ~~high compression rate~~ image quality is continued; ~~and~~  
first setting means for setting an encoding method suitable for a low compression rate when the forming of the image with the low compression rate high image quality is selected by the second selecting means, while maintaining the compression method and the compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the first selecting means

~~when the forming of the image with the high compression rate is selected to continue by the second selection means;~~

second setting means for setting an encoding method suitable for a high compression rate, when the distinguishing means distinguishes that the original image is not a highly detailed image and when the second selecting means does not select the forming of the image with the high image quality;

image processing means for reading the original image through re-scanning by the reading means and converting the image data on the various colors respectively to image signals for image forming;

registering means for compressing image signals of different colors supplied from the image processing means with the compression rate and the encoding method set by the first setting means or second setting means, and registering the image signals as compressed image data in a storage portion; and

image forming means for reading the compressed image data registered by the registering means in the storage portion and forming an image in an image-formed medium by an image signal for image forming expanded based on the compression rate and the encoding method set by the first setting means or second setting means.

Claims 12-16 (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) An image forming method comprising:

reading image data of a variety of colors by scanning an original image from an original;

selecting ~~whether image quality is low or high~~ image forming with respect to an original of low image quality;

expanding the image data of an the original image read from an the original in bitmap data of one page of the original through prescanning by the reading step, the image data corresponding to a predetermined one of a of the variety of colors;

distinguishing whether the original image is a highly detailed image or not by an amount of the bitmap data;

determining whether or not an image of sufficient image quality can be formed when an image distinguished by the distinguishing step is compressed by a compression method and a compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the selecting step;

guiding, when the determining step determines that the image of sufficient image quality cannot be formed, interrupting forming of the image, ~~and~~ guiding an operator and displaying a warning message;

selecting whether or not the forming of the image with a high ~~compression rate~~ image quality is continued; and

setting an encoding method suitable for a low compression rate when the forming of the image with the ~~low compression rate~~ high image quality is selected by the second selecting step, ~~while maintaining the compression method and the compression rate corresponding to the image quality selected by the first selecting step when the forming of the image with the high compression rate is selected to continue by the second selecting step;~~

setting an encoding method suitable for a high compression rate, when the distinguishing step distinguishes that the original image is not a highly detailed image and when the second selecting step does not select the forming of the image with the high image quality;

reading the original image through re-scanning by the reading step and converting the image data on the various colors respectively to image signals for image forming; and

compressing image signals of different colors supplied from the reading and converting step with the compression rate and the encoding method set by the first setting step or second setting step, and registering the image signals as compressed image data in a storage portion; and

reading the compressed image data registered by the compressing and registering step in the storage portion and forming an image in an image-formed medium by an image signal for image forming expanded based on the compression rate and the encoding method set by the first setting step or second setting step.

Claims 18-19 (Canceled).

20. (New) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the various colors are red, green and blue.

21. (New) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the predetermined one of the variety of colors is red.

22. (New) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the compressing and expanding are performed by a common circuit.

23. (New) The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the highly detailed image is a photographic image or a detailed design drawing, and an image which is not the highly detailed image is an image formed of character strings.

24. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the various colors are red, green and blue.

25. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the predetermined one of the variety of colors is red.

26. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the compressing and expanding are performed by a common circuit.

27. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the highly detailed image is a photographic image or a detailed design drawing, and an image which is not the highly detailed image is an image formed of character strings.